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2016 Australian Association Report for the World Council AGM

Melges 24's in Australia have maintained their active participant numbers with several changes in boat owners during 2015-16. Australia continues to attract high quality one design sailors into the Melges 24 fleet as well as family orientated boat owners that want to compete with elite level competitors.

There are currently 28 boats in Australia with 50% of boat owners being Association members and actively participating in Association events.

The Australian Association continues to work towards expanding its presence in across all states of Australia. The 2016 Australian Championship was held at the Lake Macquarie Yacht Club in March with a lead up regatta being part of our East Coast Championship held on the previous weekend. 13 boats competed in the Australian Championships won by Chris Links and his team on Cavallino AUS 795, in varying conditions that provided ideal racing with great hospitality for all.

We acknowledge and thank the World Council for the contribution of funding to allow for video reporting of the event, published on line daily along with a write up, which we see as an ideal promotional tool for sailors thinking of making the move into a Melges 24. A final series video wrap can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JBfDHM-iRtk>

As reported to last year's AGM our Association has decided to target the State of Victoria, mainly through the city of Melbourne and surrounding Port Phillip Bay, as the next state with high potential for growth. To this end the 2017 Australian Championships will be sailed from the Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron in early February on the same course area used for the 2014 Moth Worlds. We already have one new local team coming into the class as a result and look forward to generating more interest as we head into summer.

We continue to work on a summer calendar to promote travel between states with a regatta schedule developed with grouped events to allow a circuit style of racing series.

We continue to work on a national 3 year strategic media & promotion plan to take advantage of any further IMCA publicity funding and increase the exposure of the class to the Australian Sailing and Non-Sailing communities. To this end we have developed a new website that went live in October 2016 and have consolidated our social media sources building on our national Facebook page. However with a small membership base and limited funds we can only achieve change incrementally.

The Australian Association AGM will be held in conjunction with the National Titles at Blairgowrie in Victoria during February 2017. Due to popular demand the Association has also set the 2018 Australian Championships two years in advance. They will be sailed at a regional location, Port Lincoln in South Australia, as part of the annual Lincoln Week Regatta (keel boats) in February 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DR' or 'D. Royle', written in a cursive style.

David Royle

President
30 October 2016